

In the Claims:

Please amend claims 1, 11, 20, 30, 39 and 49 as indicated below.

1. (Currently amended) A computer-implemented method, comprising:

receiving an instant messaging operation directed to a given user of an instant messenger, wherein said given user is not offline, wherein said instant messaging operation is associated with a specific presence state of ~~an~~ the instant messenger, ~~and~~ wherein the specific presence state associated with the received instant messaging operation is determined separately from a current presence state that is currently assigned to the instant messenger, and wherein said current presence state is selected from a plurality of possible presence states other than a presence state that indicates only that the given user of the instant messenger is online;

in response to receiving said instant messaging operation, determining whether the current presence state that is currently assigned to said instant messenger matches the specific presence state associated with the received instant messaging operation, wherein said current presence state corresponds to said given user and indicates presence information other than just that the given user of the instant messenger is online; and

in response to determining that said specific presence state of the received instant messaging operation matches said current presence state assigned to said instant messenger, performing said instant messaging operation;

wherein each of said receiving, said determining, and said performing is implemented by one or more computer systems.

2. (Original) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein said instant messaging operation comprises a chat operation.

3. (Original) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein said instant messaging operation comprises an alert operation.

4. (Original) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein said instant messaging operation comprises a poll operation.

5. (Previously presented) The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising:

in response to determining that said specific presence state of the received instant messaging operation does not match said current presence state assigned to said instant messenger, queuing said instant messaging operation.

6. (Previously presented) The method as recited in claim 5, wherein said instant messaging operation is a chat operation initiated by a second user, and wherein queuing said instant messaging operation further comprises notifying said second user of said queuing.

7. (Previously presented) The method as recited in claim 5, further comprising:

subsequent to queuing said instant messaging operation, detecting a transition of said current presence state assigned to said instant messenger to a presence state that matches the specific presence state associated with the instant messaging operation; and

performing the queued instant messaging operation in response to detecting said transition.

8. (Previously presented) The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising:

detecting a computer system activity level indicative of computer system activity;

determining whether said activity level exceeds an activity threshold in response to said detecting; and

transitioning said current presence state of said instant messenger to a busy state in response to determining that said activity level exceeds said activity threshold.

9. (Previously presented) The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising:

storing schedule information corresponding to said given user, wherein said schedule information is indicative of an activity status of said given user at a given time;

querying said schedule information; and

if said current presence state of said instant messenger does not correspond to said activity status indicated by said schedule information, assigning a different presence state that corresponds to said activity status in response to said querying, wherein said current presence state and said different presence state each correspond to said given user.

10. (Canceled)

11. (Currently amended) A computer-implemented method, comprising:

receiving an instant messaging operation associated with a specific presence state of an instant messenger that receives the instant messaging operation;

storing ~~the~~an instant messaging operation associated with ~~the~~a specific presence state of ~~an~~the instant messenger, wherein the specific presence state associated with the received instant messaging operation is determined separately from a current presence state that is currently assigned to the instant messenger, wherein said specific presence state is selected from a plurality of possible presence states other than a presence state that indicates only that a given user of the instant messenger is online;

detecting a transition of said current presence state assigned to said instant messenger to said specific presence state subsequent to said storing, such that as a result of said transition, the specific presence state becomes visible to other users as indicative of said given user and indicates presence information other than just that the given user of the instant messenger is online; and

performing said instant messaging operation in response to said detecting;

wherein each of said storing, said detecting, and said performing is implemented by one or more computer systems.

12. (Original) The method as recited in claim 11, wherein said instant messaging operation comprises a chat operation.

13. (Previously presented) The method as recited in claim 12, wherein said specific presence state is indicative of an idle user state, and wherein performing said instant messaging operation comprises initiating said chat operation.

14. (Original) The method as recited in claim 11, wherein said instant messaging operation comprises an alert operation.

15. (Previously presented) The method as recited in claim 14, wherein said specific presence state is indicative of an idle user state, and wherein performing said instant messaging operation comprises initiating said alert operation.

16. (Original) The method as recited in claim 11, wherein said instant messaging operation comprises a poll operation.

17. (Previously presented) The method as recited in claim 11, further comprising:

detecting a computer system activity level indicative of computer system activity;

determining whether said activity level exceeds an activity threshold in response to said detecting; and

transitioning said current presence state of said instant messenger to a busy state in response to determining that said activity level exceeds said activity threshold.

18. (Previously presented) The method as recited in claim 11, further comprising:

storing schedule information corresponding to said given user, wherein said schedule information is indicative of an activity status of said given user at a given time;

querying said schedule information; and

if said current presence state of said instant messenger does not correspond to said activity status indicated by said schedule information, assigning a different presence state that corresponds to said activity status in response to said

querying, wherein said current presence state and said different presence state each correspond to said given user.

19. (Canceled)

20. (Currently amended) A computer-accessible storage medium, comprising program instructions, wherein the program instructions are computer-executable to:

receive an instant messaging operation directed to a given user of an instant messenger, wherein said given user is not offline, wherein said instant messaging operation is associated with a specific presence state of ~~an~~ the instant messenger, ~~and~~ wherein the specific presence state associated with the received instant messaging operation is determined separately from a current presence state that is currently assigned to the instant messenger, and wherein said current presence state is selected from a plurality of possible presence states other than a presence state that indicates only that the given user of the instant messenger is online;

in response to receiving said instant messaging operation, determine whether the current presence state that is currently assigned to said instant messenger matches the specific presence state associated with the received instant messaging operation, wherein said current presence state corresponds to said given user and indicates presence information other than just that the given user of the instant messenger is online; and

in response to determining that said specific presence state of the received instant messaging operation matches said current presence state assigned to said instant messenger, perform said instant messaging operation.

21. (Previously presented) The computer-accessible storage medium as recited in claim 20, wherein said instant messaging operation comprises a chat operation.

22. (Previously presented) The computer-accessible storage medium as recited in claim 20, wherein said instant messaging operation comprises an alert operation.

23. (Previously presented) The computer-accessible storage medium as recited in claim 20, wherein said instant messaging operation comprises a poll operation.

24. (Previously presented) The computer-accessible storage medium as recited in claim 20, wherein said program instructions are further computer-executable to:

in response to determining that said specific presence state of the received instant messaging operation does not match said current presence state assigned to said instant messenger, queue said instant messaging operation.

25. (Previously presented) The computer-accessible storage medium as recited in claim 24, wherein said instant messaging operation is a chat operation initiated by a second user, and wherein queuing said instant messaging operation further comprises notifying said second user of said queuing.

26. (Previously presented) The computer-accessible storage medium as recited in claim 24, wherein said program instructions are further computer-executable to:

subsequent to queuing said instant messaging operation, detect a transition of said current presence state assigned to said instant messenger to a presence state that matches the specific presence state associated with the instant messaging operation; and

perform the queued instant messaging operation in response to detecting said transition.

27. (Previously presented) The computer-accessible storage medium as recited in claim 20, wherein said program instructions are further computer-executable to:

detect a computer system activity level indicative of computer system activity;

determine whether said activity level exceeds an activity threshold in response to said detecting; and

transition said current presence state of said instant messenger to a busy state in response to determining that said activity level exceeds said activity threshold.

28. (Previously presented) The computer-accessible storage medium as recited in claim 20, wherein said program instructions are further computer-executable to:

store schedule information corresponding to said given user, wherein said schedule information is indicative of an activity status of said given user at a given time;

query said schedule information; and

if said current presence state of said instant messenger does not correspond to said activity status indicated by said schedule information, assign a different presence state that corresponds to said activity status in response to said querying, wherein said current presence state and said different presence state each correspond to said given user.

29. (Canceled)

30. (Currently amended) A computer-accessible storage medium, comprising program instructions, wherein the program instructions are computer-executable to:

receive an instant messaging operation associated with a specific presence state of an instant messenger that receives the instant messaging operation;

store ~~an~~ the instant messaging operation associated with ~~a~~ the specific presence state of ~~an~~ the instant messenger, wherein the specific presence state associated with the received instant messaging operation is determined separately from a current presence state that is currently assigned to the instant messenger, wherein said specific presence state is selected from a plurality of possible presence states other than a presence state that indicates only that a given user of the instant messenger is online;

detect a transition of said current presence state assigned to said instant messenger to said specific presence state subsequent to said storing, such that as a result of said transition, the specific presence state becomes visible to other users as indicative of said given user and indicates presence information other than just that the given user of the instant messenger is online; and

perform said instant messaging operation in response to said detecting.

31. (Previously presented) The computer-accessible storage medium as recited in claim 30, wherein said instant messaging operation comprises a chat operation.

32. (Previously presented) The computer-accessible storage medium as recited in claim 31, wherein said specific presence state is indicative of an idle user state, and wherein performing said instant messaging operation comprises initiating said chat operation.

33. (Previously presented) The computer-accessible storage medium as recited in claim 30, wherein said instant messaging operation comprises an alert operation.

34. (Previously presented) The computer-accessible storage medium as recited in claim 33, wherein said specific presence state is indicative of an idle user state, and wherein performing said instant messaging operation comprises initiating said alert operation.

35. (Previously presented) The computer-accessible storage medium as recited in claim 30, wherein said instant messaging operation comprises a poll operation.

36. (Previously presented) The computer-accessible storage medium as recited in claim 30, wherein said program instructions are further computer-executable to:

detect a computer system activity level indicative of computer system activity;

determine whether said activity level exceeds an activity threshold in response to said detecting; and

transition said current presence state of said instant messenger to a busy state in response to determining that said activity level exceeds said activity threshold.

37. (Previously presented) The computer-accessible storage medium as recited in claim 30, wherein said program instructions are further computer-executable to:

store schedule information corresponding to said given user, wherein said schedule information is indicative of an activity status of said given user at a given time;

query said schedule information; and

if said current presence state of said instant messenger does not correspond to said activity status indicated by said schedule information, assign a different presence state that corresponds to said activity status in response to said querying, wherein said current presence state and said different presence state each correspond to said given user.

38. (Canceled)

39. (Currently amended) A system, comprising:

a memory; and

a processor coupled to said memory and configured to execute instructions, wherein the instructions are executable to implement an instant messenger software module;

wherein said instant messenger software module is further configured to:

receive an instant messaging operation directed to a given user of an instant messenger, wherein said given user is not offline, wherein said instant messaging operation is associated with a specific presence state of ~~an~~ the instant messenger, ~~and~~ wherein the specific presence state associated with the received instant messaging operation is determined separately from a current presence state that is currently assigned to the instant messenger, and wherein said current presence state is selected from a plurality of possible presence states other than a presence state that indicates only that the given user of the instant messenger is online;

in response to receiving said instant messaging operation, determine whether the current presence state that is currently assigned to said

instant messenger matches the specific presence state associated with the received instant messaging operation, wherein said current presence state corresponds to said given user and indicates presence information other than just that the given user of the instant messenger is online; and

in response to determining that said specific presence state of the received instant messaging operation matches said current presence state, perform said instant messaging operation.

40. (Original) The system as recited in claim 39, wherein said instant messaging operation comprises a chat operation.

41. (Original) The system as recited in claim 39, wherein said instant messaging operation comprises an alert operation.

42. (Original) The system as recited in claim 39, wherein said instant messaging operation comprises a poll operation.

43. (Previously presented) The system as recited in claim 39, wherein said instant messenger software module is further configured to:

in response to determining that said specific presence state of the received instant messaging operation does not match said current presence state assigned to said instant messenger, queue said instant messaging operation.

44. (Previously presented) The system as recited in claim 43, wherein said instant messaging operation is a chat operation initiated by a second user, and wherein queuing said instant messaging operation further comprises notifying said second user of said queuing.

45. (Previously presented) The system as recited in claim 43, wherein said instant messenger software module is further configured to:

subsequent to queuing said instant messaging operation, detect a transition of said current presence state assigned to said instant messenger to a presence state that matches the specific presence state associated with the instant messaging operation; and

perform the queued instant messaging operation in response to detecting said transition.

46. (Previously presented) The system as recited in claim 39, wherein said instant messenger software module is further configured to:

detect a computer system activity level indicative of computer system activity;

determine whether said activity level exceeds an activity threshold in response to said detecting; and

transition said current presence state of said instant messenger software module to a busy state in response to determining that said activity level exceeds said activity threshold.

47. (Previously presented) The system as recited in claim 39, wherein said instant messenger software module is further configured to:

store schedule information corresponding to said given user, wherein said schedule information is indicative of an activity status of said given user at a given time;

query said schedule information; and

if said current presence state of said instant messenger software module does not correspond to said activity status indicated by said schedule information, assign a different presence state that corresponds to said activity status in response to said querying, wherein said current presence state and said different presence state each correspond to said given user.

48. (Canceled)

49. (Currently amended) A system, comprising:

a memory; and

a processor coupled to said memory and configured to execute instructions, wherein the instructions are executable to implement an instant messenger software module;

wherein said instant messenger software module is further configured to:

receive an instant messaging operation associated with a specific presence state of an instant messenger that receives said instant messaging operation;

store an instant messaging operation associated with ~~a~~the specific presence state of said instant messenger ~~software module~~, wherein the specific presence state associated with the received instant messaging operation is determined separately from a current presence state that is currently assigned to the instant messenger, wherein said specific presence state is selected from a plurality of possible presence states other than a presence state that indicates only that a given user of the instant messenger is online;

detect a transition of said current presence state assigned to said instant messenger to said specific presence state subsequent to said storing, such that as a result of said transition, the specific presence state becomes visible to other users as indicative of said given user and indicates presence information other than just that the given user of the instant messenger is online; and

perform said instant messaging operation in response to said detecting.

50. (Original) The system as recited in claim 49, wherein said instant messaging operation comprises a chat operation.

51. (Previously presented) The system as recited in claim 50, wherein said specific presence state is indicative of an idle user state, and wherein performing said instant messaging operation comprises initiating said chat operation.

52. (Original) The system as recited in claim 49, wherein said instant messaging operation comprises an alert operation.

53. (Previously presented) The system as recited in claim 52, wherein said specific presence state is indicative of an idle user state, and wherein performing said instant messaging operation comprises initiating said alert operation.

54. (Original) The system as recited in claim 49, wherein said instant messaging operation comprises a poll operation.

55. (Previously presented) The system as recited in claim 49, wherein said instant messenger software module is further configured to:

detect a computer system activity level indicative of computer system activity;

determine whether said activity level exceeds an activity threshold in response to said detecting; and

transition said current presence state of said instant messenger software module to a busy state in response to determining that said activity level exceeds said activity threshold.

56. (Previously presented) The system as recited in claim 49, wherein said instant messenger software module is further configured to:

store schedule information corresponding to said given user, wherein said schedule information is indicative of an activity status of said given user at a given time;

query said schedule information; and

if said current presence state of said instant messenger software module does not correspond to said activity status indicated by said schedule information, assign a different presence state that corresponds to said activity status in response to said querying, wherein said current presence state and said different presence state each correspond to said given user.

57. (Canceled)